You have next raised the question of remission on account of breaches of bunds. The rules in force on the subject do not contemplate remission in such cases, but you want those rules to be amended. The question is one which would involve Government in a large financial commitment, and I do not think that it can be answered in a hurry. In cases of wide-spread calamity, remissions are allowed even now in Central and North Travancore as a matter of grace. Only a few days ago, remission to the extent of over Rs. 2,000 was granted in regard to the West Kallada *pakuthi* where there was inundation.

You then referred to *kayal* cultivation and the exhaustion of *kayal* land. That is a new question. I thought that, of all soils in the country, *kayal* soil was one of the most fertile, but any soil would get exhausted if cultivation is continued without allowing the soil time to recuperate. That is, however, a matter for the Director of Agriculture. I am sure he would look into it and suggest the necessary remedy.

You have also referred to Agricultural Engineering. I believe there is necessity for an Agricultural Engineer. But that means money again, and it should be examined if Government can afford to have an officer.

In regard to encroachments on *kayals*, there is already a rule which requires that the P. W. D. should inspect the encroachments and state whether they are objectionable or not. I do not see what an Agricultural Officer can do in the matter.

11. Need for assigning lands on concessional terms.

Mr. Utuppan Tomman (Member, Todupuzha Taluk) said that the rates of *tharavila*, *thadivila* and assessment under the Revised Puduval Rules were very heavy. He strongly criticised the new Rules and said that the old rules recognised occupancy right and first application as the deciding factors in the assignment of *puduval* lands, while the provisions relating to auction sale in the new Rules had nullified the effect of those wholesome principles, and made it possible for the rich foreigner to buy up all lands at the auction to the exclusion of the poor ryots of the State. The Member, therefore, made the following suggestions for the consideration of Government:—

(1) The system of auctioning *puduval* lands should be changed and arrangements made for the registry of lands in the names of occupants in the case of occupied lands and in the names of first applicants in the case of unoccupied lands.

(2) The *tharavila* for *puduval* lands should be reduced to Rs. 3 per acre; the *tharam* assessment to be levied on such lands should be moderate and should never be greater than the *tharam* fixed at the Settlement for similar neighbouring lands; and *tharavila* and other dues should be made payable in easy instalments within a period of 3 years.

(3) Past occupations of the ryots over swampy areas within reserves should be recognised and the lands assigned to them.

(4) Dry lands within reserved forests should be relinquished and granted on registry to ryots holding wet lands on a fixed and moderate *tharavila* at the rate of two acres of dry land for every acre of wet land.

(5) All swampy lands within reserved forests, which were not likely to be of use to the Government in the near future, should be disafforested and assigned to the people.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's speech is mostly confined to an attack on the working of the Revised Puduval Rules. These rules were passed after very careful consideration, and after they were subjected to criticism by the people for months and by the Members of this Assembly last year. An extensive revision of the Puduval Rules so soon is a matter which I think this House itself would deprecate. If there are any particular points which require attention, they could be attended to and minor defects remedied. But the policy laid down in these rules should be tried for some time. You complain about the rules regarding *tharavila* and *thadivila*. No fixed *tharavila* has been prescribed in the rules; they only prescribe certain minima for particular kinds of lands. The rules provide for grant of lands without

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

payment of *tharavila* in the case of the depressed classes and the poor of all communities and remission of *thadivila* up to a limit of Rs. 10 per acre has also been provided for. Similarly, Government have the power to dispense with auction in any particular case in which such departure is justifiable or desirable. In the case of valuable improvements, the lands will be assigned to the occupants without auction. I do not, therefore, see what extensive change of policy is required in the Puduval Rules just now.

As for the swamps in the reserved forests, I have already said that the question of appointing Committees for investigating the question is engaging the attention of Government.

12. Impropriety of abolishing the Mavelikara taluk.

Mr. C. K. Krishna Pillai (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) referred to the report of the Devaswom Separation Committee and pointed out how it was proposed to find funds for the creation of the new Devaswom Department by the abolition of five taluks and the Padmanabhapuram Division. He referred to the opinions expressed by the late Settlement Peishkar, Mr. S. Padmanabha Aiyar, and Dewan Mr. P. Rajagopalachari, against the reduction of taluks which were formed more for the convenience of the public than for anything else. He pointed out that the Government would be well-advised if they could find other sources of income to meet this new item of expenditure. He also made references to the various memorials already submitted to Government in regard to the proposed abolition of the taluks as indicating the large volume of public opinion against the proposal. He suggested that, instead of abolishing the taluks for the sake of funds, a reduction in the number of *pakuthies* of smaller dimensions might be resolved upon and said that this would give the Government the saving of a sum more than enough for organising the Devaswom Department. By the reduction of *pakuthies* whose number was increased at the last Settlement, no great inconvenience or hardship would ensue to the general public, while the reduction of taluks would be highly distasteful to the people in that they would be thereby deprived of the benefits long enjoyed by them. In case Government resolved to abolish the five taluks, the Member prayed that Mavelikara, which was not included in the Committee's report, might be left intact for the following reasons :—

(1) that, by the abolition of the Mavelikara taluk and the amalgamation of the same with Kartikapalli, the location of the taluk office would be at a place 4 miles away from the westernmost limit and 20 miles away from the easternmost limit of the taluk, whereas, by the abolition of the Kartikapalli taluk, the location of the office would be 12 miles equidistant from the borders of the two taluks;

(2) that, in respect of schools, markets and other human necessities, the Mavelikara taluk possessed better facilities than Kartikapalli which had no river, High Schools, good roads or a telegraph office;

(3) that, by the abolition of the taluks of Chengannur and Mavelikara, there would be no taluk office between Kartikapalli and Pattanamtitta for a distance of 35 miles;

(4) that Mavelikara was more important than Kartikapalli, as could be seen from the memorial and memorandum already submitted to Government by the local inhabitants ;

(5) that Mavelikara is larger and more populous than Kartikapalli; and

(6) that Mavelikara was the abode of several Malayala Kshatriya families, and was, besides, a flourishing taluk the progress of which should not be handicapped in any way.

The Member also prayed that either a First or Second Class Magistrate's Court be established at Mavelikara, in case the Tahsildar was divested of his magisterial functions.

Dewan's reply.—The matter has not been finally decided. On my part, I have kept the promise to keep the question open till the Assembly is over. Your representations will be very carefully considered before a decision is reached.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly